



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Baltimore District

The Corps' pondent

a newsletter by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the residents of Spring Valley

August/September 2003

Officials discuss EE/CA study at Aug. 5 community meeting

by Gary Schilling
Lead Project Manager, Spring Valley

Approximately 30 Spring Valley residents and officials with the Army Corps of Engineers, Environmental Protection Agency and D.C. Department of Health met during a public meeting Aug. 5 at the Sibley Hospital auditorium to discuss the draft final Engineer Evaluation/Cost Analysis report, or EE/CA.

The Corps is accepting public comments on the report until Sept. 5, which covers the Corps' continuing investigation and restoration of the Spring Valley formerly used defense site.

The draft report provides a justification for the proposed non-time critical removal action of arsenic contaminated soils. The report has been placed in the project's document repository at the Palisades Branch library, and is available on the project's web site. A CD copy of the report is also available by calling the project's information line at 1-800-434-0988.

Comments received during this comment period will be addressed in the final EE/CA report.

In addition to the EE/CA discussion at the meeting, a project update was given, and break-out sessions were held where residents could speak one-on-one

with agency officials.

Other project activities

In other project activities, arsenic soil removal and backfilling is nearly finished on the last of the 23 properties to be addressed this fiscal year. The Corps is planning to resume residential soil removals this fall or early this winter.

The Corps will continue to accomplish these removals by placing properties into small manageable groups, with prioritization being based on each property's respective property-wide arsenic levels known as Exposure Point Concentrations, and other project management factors.

With the field work nearly complete at the Spaulding/Captain Rankin area, pending regulator approval, the Corps plans to resume work at Lot 18, which is an area on American University adjacent to several Rockwood Parkway properties.

Over the last year, a collection of post-World War I residential trash, glassware and a few pieces of scrap ordnance have been removed from what appears to be a debris field. No chemical warfare materiel or breakdown products have been found in this area.

Elsewhere on the American

University campus, arsenic soil removal and restoration at the intramural fields is complete.

Sampling outside boundary

In other work, the Corps plans to soon sample the soil of several properties outside of the current boundary of the Spring Valley site to ensure that the investigation is as thorough as possible.

The three locations selected for this sampling are areas where elevated arsenic levels were found on properties along the boundary.

This effort will follow the same sampling methodology, as well as any follow-on work, as in the past area-wide soil sampling.

Concerns about your health?

In December 2002, the D.C. Department of Health established a medical surveillance system to identify and monitor any arsenic-related illnesses among Spring Valley residents.

Residents who may have concerns regarding exposure to arsenic and the medical surveillance effort are asked to contact Dr. Michael Richardson, Senior Deputy Director, Medical Affairs Office at **202-671-0733**.



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August 2003 RAB meeting

The Spring Valley Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) met Aug. 12 at St. David's Episcopal Church on Macomb Street. The meeting featured a presentation on Chemical Warfare Materiel, or CWM, by Greg Nielson, a Corps of Engineers' project manager, and included discussions of project "comfort letters," and future ground rules at RAB meetings.

Nielson's presentation outlined the history and methodology for sampling of Spring Valley soil to test for the potential presence of explosives, chemical warfare materiel, and their specific breakdown products. Even though arsenic is a breakdown product of some CWM, it is also a natural substance in soil, as well as a component of many industrial chemicals and fossil fuels.

For these reasons, arsenic is not considered a specific breakdown product of chemical warfare materiel. Sampling for chemicals that are specific to explosives and their respective breakdown products, World War I CWM, and chemicals derived from the breakdown of CWM, was the focus of the

presentation. General properties, toxicity, toxicity of CWM breakdown products, the degradation cycle for various types of CWM, sampling plans and results for CWM at the Spaulding/Captain Rankin Area, and two of the three excavations done on Glenbrook Road were discussed.

The RAB discussed the air monitoring and filtration equipment, used during the excavation of sites suspected of containing CWM.

Letters to residents

The meeting continued with a discussion about property completion letters, or "comfort letters," that residents will receive. RAB members were asked to give their opinion on letters the community needs, and the agencies that should sign the letters. EPA has been working with the RAB to write specific language for a letter to give residents whose properties' soil testing indicated no elevated levels of arsenic, and therefore didn't require removal.

It was proposed that the EPA and D.C. Health sign this letter. Other proposed categories of

EPA/D.C. Health letters include properties that underwent soil removal, and properties that underwent testing for chemicals other than arsenic. Also discussed was a Corps letter to each property owner whose arsenic and geophysical survey issues are resolved. This letter would also address the Corps' obligation to the neighborhood in the event that any additional Army-related contamination is discovered in the future. The project partners will discuss the specifics of all these letters at future partnering meeting.

New RAB ground rules

Following this, a discussion on rules of conduct at future RAB meetings was led by Dorothy Zolandz, RAB community co-chair. After a few changes, the new rules were ratified by an almost unanimous vote. These new rules will be added to the RAB's operating procedures and posted to the project's web site.

The September RAB meeting will be at the Corps' Spring Valley Resident Office at 5201 Little Falls Road, behind Sibley Hospital.

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